AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. - 15. (canceled).

16. (currently amended): A device for the dressing of cut tobacco in a particular distributor for the production of cigarettes, the tobacco being introduced into the distributor and being treated within the ~~letter~~ distributor by loosening up, by elimination of ~~(tobacco)~~ tobacco lumps and by sifting, and preparing the tobacco for forming a tobacco strand, with the aid of a metering system (12), **characterized by** the following features:

a) a sifter (15) for sifting the tobacco, wherein the sifter on one hand and the distributor for loosening up the tobacco and for elimination of the lumps on the other hand are separate ~~equipment~~ equipments arranged in a distributor housing (17) on one hand and in a separate sifter housing (16) on the other hand,

b) the tobacco is first conveyed through the sifter (15) and after sifting the tobacco is conveyed by a connecting line (20) into the distributor or into the distributor housing (17) respectively.

17. (previously presented): The device according to claim 16, **characterized by** the following features:

a) the tobacco is conveyed into the sifter (15) by a supply line (19) at an upper side of the sifter housing (17), while air is introduced into the sifter (15) by an airline (26) at a lower side of the sifter (15),

b) the connecting line (20) for conveying the sifted tobacco into the sifter housing is arranged at the upper side of the sifter housing (16) on one hand and the distributor housing (17) on the other hand.

18. (previously presented): The device according to claim 16, **characterized by** the following features:

a) the sifter (15) is a cone-type sifter with an upright guide body (21) within the cylindrical sifter housing (16),

b) the guide body consists of preferably two double cones arranged one above the other,

c) the guide body is arranged centrally within the sifter housing (16) and is surrounded by a guide wall (22) of circular cross section,

d) the guide wall (22) runs at a distance from an outer service area of the guide body (21) forming a wavy or zigzag-chapped sifting duct (23) between the guide body (21) and the guide wall (22).

19. (previously presented): The device according to claim 17, **characterized by** the following features:

a) the sifter (15) is a cone-type sifter with an upright guide body (21) within the cylindrical sifter housing (16),

b) the guide body consists of preferably two double cones arranged one above the other,

c) the guide body is arranged centrally within in the sifter housing (16) and is surrounded by a guide wall (22) of circular cross section,

d) the guide wall (22) runs at a distance from an outer service area of the guide body (21) forming a wavy or zigzag-chapped sifting duct (23) between the guide body (21) and the guide wall (22).

20. (previously presented): The device according to claim 16, **characterized in that** the distributor and the sifter (15) are mounted on a machine stand (18) for both ~~equipment.~~ said equipments.

21. (previously presented): The device according to claim 18, **characterized in that** within the sifter (15) namely within the sifter housing (16) a collecting chamber for sifted tobacco is arranged above the guide body, the connecting line (20) being connected to the sifter (15) at the collecting chamber (31).

22. (previously presented): The device according to claim 19, **characterized in that** within the sifter (15) namely within the sifter housing (16) a collecting chamber for sifted tobacco is arranged above the guide body, the connecting line (20) being connected to the sifter (15) at the collecting chamber (31).

23. (previously presented): The device according to claim 17, **characterized by** the following features:

a) the airline (26) for conveying air into the sifter (15) is connected to the sifter (15) in the area of a chamber (27) in the lower area of the sifter (15),

b) the guide wall surrounding the guide body (21) is designed to be air-permeable by an obliquely directed or conical sieve (28).

24. (previously presented): The device according to claim 16, **characterized by** the following features:

a) the connecting line (20) for conveying the sifted tobacco from the sifter (15) into the distributor is connected to the distributor housing (70) at a lock (10) within the distributor housing (17),

b) a bottom of the lock consists of flaps (33) which are pivoted downwards in order to open the lock (10) to the distributor.

25. (currently amended): A device for the dressing of cut tobacco for the production of cigarettes the tobacco being treated within a distributor by loosening up, by eliminating ~~(tobacco)~~tobacco lumps and by sifting, preparing the tobacco for forming a tobacco strand with the aid of a metering system (12), **characterized by** the following features:

a) a sifter (15) and the metering system are arranged within a common distributor housing,

b) the sifter (15) consists of an upright sifting duct (56) into which the tobacco is conveyed,

c) at a lower end the sifting duct (56) is connected to an upright air duct (62) through which air is conducted into the sifting duct (56), the air being generated by a fan (61),

d) the air duct (62) follows with an upper region coupled to an upper end of the sifting duct (56) in such a way that the sifting duct (56) and the air duct (62) form a closed flow circulation system,

e) a tobacco stream (60) from the sifting duct (56) is deflected by a deflecting duct (59) which follows the sifting duct (56) in which the tobacco stream (60) is supplied into the metering system (12) in a downwardly direction,

f) in the region of the deflecting duct (59) an air-permeable drum (64) driven in rotation is connected to the air duct (62) in such a way that air can be sucked by the fan (61) in the area of the drum (64).